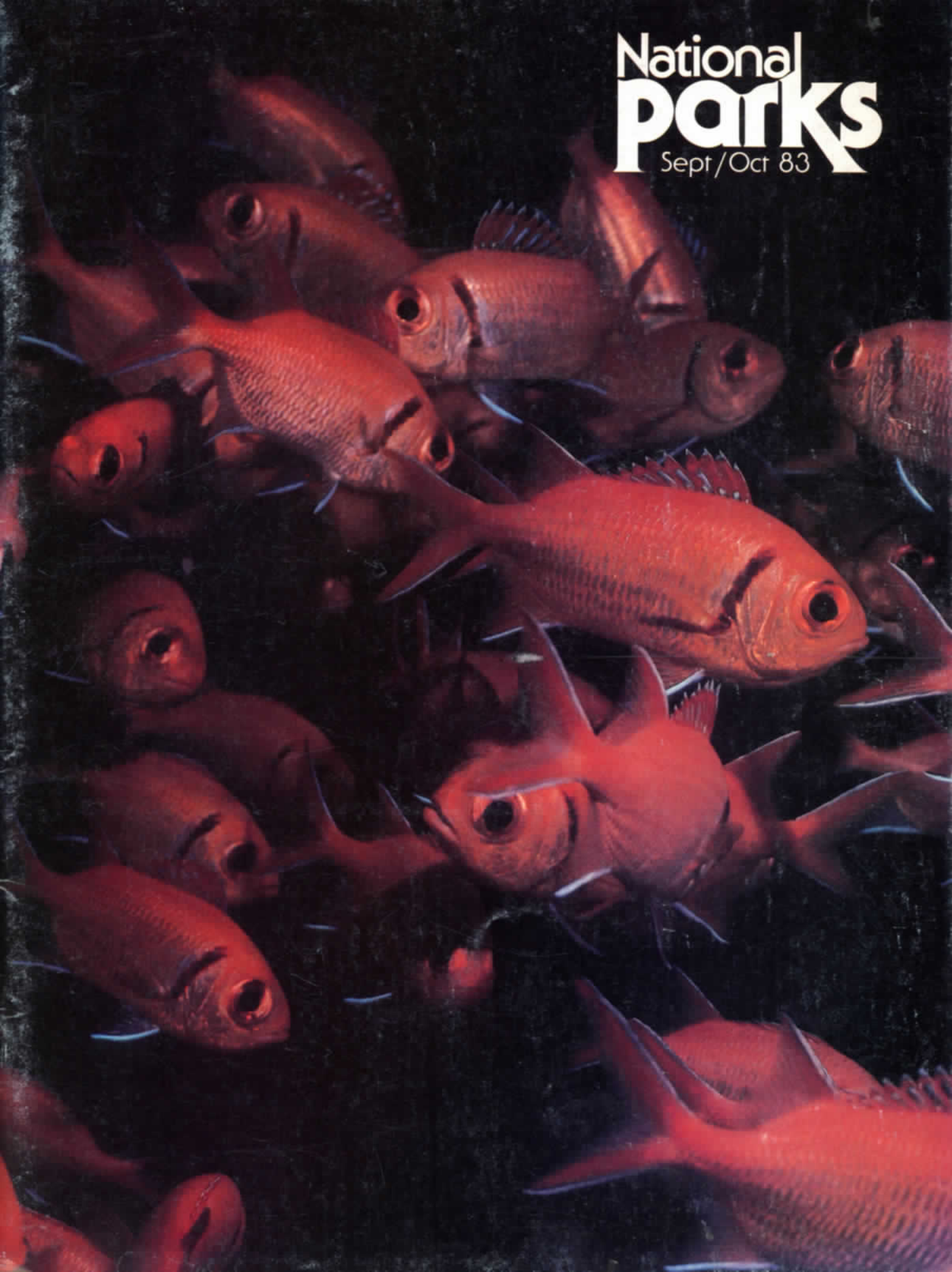


National parks

Sept/Oct 83



Land Purchases a Priority At Channel Islands

The Channel Islands, off the southern California coast, rise from the sea like giant chunks of an ancient land. The beaches and the waters that surround these primordial islands are crowded with sea life—from seals and shore birds to great kelp "forests."

In 1938 President Franklin D. Roosevelt proclaimed the three-island Anacapa group and Santa Barbara Island as Channel Islands National Monument. In 1980, Congress gave these and the rest of the northern cluster of islands—San Miguel, Santa Rosa, and Santa Cruz—full national park status. The actual park boundary lies one nautical mile from the shore of each island. An additional five-mile-wide zone has been designated as the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

At that time Congress authorized the appropriation of \$30.1 million from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for purchasing Santa Rosa and the eastern end of Santa Cruz. To date, no funds have been spent on land acquisition. (Most of Santa Cruz Island has been acquired by The Nature Conservancy and is thus protected.)

This past May, the National Park



Russell D. Butcher

The westward view of Middle Anacapa Island is one of primordial beauty.

Service (NPS) issued its draft Land Protection Plan, which recommends:

- Transfer from Navy ownership to NPS ownership of San Miguel Island.
- Prompt acquisition of Santa Rosa Island, with a phased acquisition plan if complete funding is not immediately available.
- Prompt acquisition of the eastern end of Santa Cruz, with phased acquisition if necessary.

Russ Butcher, NPCA's Southwest regional representative, said, "It would indeed be an unforgivable tragedy if our generation should lose the chance to save Santa Rosa and the remaining 6,000 acres on Santa

Cruz—especially after the monumental, multimillion-dollar accomplishment of The Nature Conservancy. Every effort must be made to purchase the land from these willing sellers."

As of this writing, Congress is considering how much funding to approve for land acquisition. Representative Robert J. Lagomarsino, in whose district the park is located, requested \$8 million for Fiscal Year 1984 acquisition; the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and National Parks has recommended \$5 million; but the Senate has recommended no funding for Channel Islands National Park.

New Senate Bill Focuses On Outdoor Recreation

On June 28, at a hearing before the Senate Subcommittee on Intergovernmental Relations, NPCA supported legislation to establish a National Outdoor Recreation Resources Review Commission (ORRRC). Testimony by NPCA President Paul Pritchard brought up a number of points to consider in S. 1090.

NPCA said an outdoor recreation commission should—

- Evaluate all present programs, including those administered by the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management. An outdoor recreation commission should also develop a consistent recreation policy among federal agencies.
- Plan for the future by providing tax incentives for private landowners to donate public open space and by promoting greenline parks.
- Develop carrying capacities for

outdoor recreation programs nationwide.

- Double the proposed life of the commission from 18 to 36 months and raise funding to \$4 million.

Pritchard also proposed the idea of making the National Park Service an independent agency, organized along the lines of the Smithsonian Institution. This suggestion has been raised before; because of this Administration's policies, however, the idea is gaining ground.

leasing would negate the qualities of three areas—De-na-zin, Ah-shi-sle-pah, and the Bisti badlands—and is urging companies to exchange leases from environmentally sensitive areas to less sensitive lands where mining leases can be blocked.

New Mexico Governor Toney Anaya concurred: "What we need now is an aggressive program of exchange or transfer so that the helter-skelter pattern of leases already in existence can be connected to logical mining units. . . ." Anaya also called

for a statewide moratorium on coal leasing that would "allow us to thoroughly consider the concerns of Native Americans, as well as the environmental, archeological, paleontological, historical, and cultural impact of the Watt policies."